

about it being in America, it's globally, that population; and that it has been carefully studied, and that the permits that are issued generate funds for Native North Americans as well as funds to help sustain the polar bear population.

I think what this debate is about, and I can't question, certainly, anybody motives, but I can tell you what I got here. I got an announcement that said: "This recorded vote will be scored on the 2007 Humane Society scorecard."

So I look at the information that I see, and much of it is source from that Web page, which I happened to have printed as well.

But I think the debate is a broader debate than the debate of the welfare of the polar bear. I think this debate is about, and I am going to broaden this, "the incremental implementation of global vegetarianism." That's the big picture. And the second picture is, ban sport hunting. And the third picture is, ban livestock production and feeding. And the fourth picture is, ban the consumption of meat. All that stuff fits within this big umbrella. This is one component of the much broader picture.

But if you take it back down to the issue that was raised, and another one is using the canard of global warming being the issue, well, it actually works against you, gentlemen. If you're worried about global warming and if you're worried about the habitat for polar bears being diminished by global warming, then humane hunting would be the thing to do as the habitat diminishes to make sure they had a healthy habitat for them to roam on. That's not the case. It's a canard, not a reason. And it's not an environmental reason. It's a broader agenda, through which the environmental and global warming agenda fits.

So this is sound science that holds this up on this side. And sports hunting is a good way to manage population.

I would urge the defeat of this amendment.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire how much time is remaining.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman has 1 minute remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 15 seconds.

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the requisite number of words.

The Acting CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Washington is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DICKS. Mr. Chairman, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND).

Mr. KIND. I want to thank my friend from Washington for yielding me this time. And, unfortunately, I rise in opposition to the amendment.

I have had numerous conversations with Mr. INSLEE, who I consider one of my closest friends and colleagues in the House, and I certainly understand the appreciation that he has in light of

the challenges we face with global warming and the potential impact it's going to have on polar bears. But as one of the cochairs of the Congressional Sportsmen's Caucus in the House, we think this amendment is unnecessary and, in fact, counterproductive.

I contacted the Canadian embassy and the Canadian Government, who opposes the amendment. They say it would risk crucial conservation funding streams and habitat protections for the very polar bears that we're all interested in protecting. Also, our own U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service opposes this, again because of the cooperative alliance that we've established not only with Canadian officials in the proper wildlife management of this special species, but the fees collected from hunting that go right back into a conservation program that the U.S. and Russia have partnered with in order to enhance the protection and the growth of this population.

Now, I've got a letter from the Canadian Government, as well as from the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, that I will submit for the RECORD that states forth more fully the science behind their calculation and the limited number of permits that they're allowing in Canada.

ASSOCIATION OF FISH
& WILDLIFE AGENCIES,
Washington, DC, June 22, 2007.

DEAR MEMBER OF CONGRESS: The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies strongly opposes H.R. 2327, the so-called "Polar Bear Protection Act", both as a stand-alone bill and as an amendment to any other legislation. This bill, which would ban the importation of trophies of polar bears legally taken from polar bear populations in Canada, will further complicate polar bear management and not contribute to polar bear sustainability.

The Association was founded in 1902 as an inter-governmental organization of public agencies charged with the protection and management of North America's fish and wildlife resources. The Association's members include the fish and wildlife agencies of the states, provinces, as well as federal government agencies in the United States and Canada. The Association provides a forum for hundreds of senior level fish and wildlife public agency biologists across North America to develop positions on public policy issues involving wildlife conservation. The Association has been instrumental in promoting sound resource management and strengthening federal, state, and private cooperation in protecting and managing fish and wildlife and their habitats in the public interest.

This legislation would diminish the bear's value to the local communities which depend on hunts by United States hunters for income. We know from long experience that most successful wildlife conservation programs have, at their core, value to local people and communities. We are advised by our Canadian colleagues that many native communities earnestly engage Canada's polar bear management programs because these animals have value—funding schools, community centers, etc. in those northern communities. This legislation, if passed and enacted, would just add to the list of other factors already complicating polar bear management—melting ice pack, warming seas and loss of snow cover.

The Marine Mammal Protection Act prerequisite that imports come from certified stocks is an important tool for those biologists working with these local communities to regulate the harvest of the various polar bear populations. These carefully set and intensely monitored harvests are critical for the local community and are an important negotiating tool for the biologists. Science-informed regulated hunting ensures sustainability of polar bear populations.

Passage of this bill would not result in the taking of fewer polar bears; it will just complicate the work of those trying to conserve them. We urge that you not favorably consider H.R. 2327 either as a stand-alone bill or as an amendment to other legislation. Thank you for your sincere consideration of our perspectives.

Sincerely,

MATT HOGAN,
Executive Director.

CANADIAN EMBASSY,
Washington, DC, June 25, 2007.

Hon. JAY INSLEE,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

Hon. FRANK A. LOBIONDO,
House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVES INSLEE AND LOBIONDO: I am writing regarding your amendment to ban the importation of polar bear trophies from Canada, which I understand may be offered to the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act 2008, when the spending bill is considered on the floor of the House this week. I would like to express Canada's strong opposition to such an amendment for the reasons outlined below.

Canada is home to two thirds of the world's polar bear population. There is broad consensus among scientists that climate warming is negatively impacting Arctic sea ice, however, these impacts occur at different rates and times in different Arctic regions. The Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada, an independent scientific body, is currently assessing the status of polar bears and will submit its conclusions to the Government of Canada in 2008. Based on that assessment, consideration will be given whether to list polar bears under the federal Species at Risk Act.

I understand that the United States is also reviewing the status of polar bears under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA). Canada has made a submission in the U.S. review and is working with other polar bear range nations on issues related to polar bear research and management. Any action, such as that proposed in the amendment is premature and should at least await the outcome of the two reviews.

I would also like to take this opportunity to clarify that the annual harvesting of polar bears in Canada is strictly regulated within scientifically determined sustainable levels. Northern Communities receiving a share of the annual quota allocate their share between subsistence hunting and sports hunting. Removal of the sports hunting exemption from the Marine Mammal Protection Act will have no impact on the numbers harvested but will cause economic hardship to Canadian Northern indigenous communities. Finally, I would point out that the export of polar bears from Canada is governed by the provisions of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), of which Canada and the United States are both signatories.

The Government of Canada takes seriously its international obligations with respect to the conservation of polar bears and their habitat, including under the International